



CONGRESSMAN JOHN P. MURTHA

Proudly Serving Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District

MURTHA'S CORNER

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MURTHA DEFENDS THE 'EARMARK' PROCESS

Congressman Murtha recently wrote the following op-ed in defense of the Congressional earmarking process:

"Congress is the branch of our government that is closest to the American people, and our representatives are entrusted by the Constitution with the power of the purse.

"The current controversy inside Washington over the issue of Congressional earmarks, which comprise less than one percent of the federal budget, is a distraction from the real problems and challenges we face. As has often been the case, the reality and facts get blurred

within the arguments and stories.

"Earmarks do not increase the federal budget, they direct funds within the budget for certain community projects or programs. If these funds are not directed by members of Congress, decisions would be left for Washington bureaucrats in various federal agencies to decide what is best for our local communities.

"I believe that representatives of the people understand their constituents and districts best.

"Earmarks have brought jobs, economic development, infrastructure, vital services, and community

improvements to our region. There was a time when economic growth came to a standstill because our region lacked the availability of sewage and water infrastructure. Because of earmarks, hundreds-of-millions of dollars in federal funds have been used to expand or replace local sewage and water lines, including current projects in Armstrong, Fayette, Somerset, and Washington Counties. Because of earmarks, 85 of our local police departments received grants for equipment and vehicles this month. Because of earmarks, we will open a new

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MURTHA BILL TO BOOST RETIREMENT SAVINGS

Congressman Murtha and Congressman Connie Mack (R-FL) have introduced bipartisan legislation to jumpstart retirement savings by allowing Roth Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to be created for children. Family members and friends who contribute to these accounts will be eligible for a tax deduction.

Under current law, an individual must earn taxable income or compensation to open any IRA, excluding chil-

dren and young Americans from opening or contributing to an account.

The Kids IRA (K-IRA) Act, H.R. 2022, changes the law and allows for children to have a Roth IRA opened in their name. Under K-IRA, family members and friends will be able to contribute to a child's retirement savings account, where their money will grow tax-free. Money given to children in an envelope for birthdays or holidays could instead be put

into a K-IRA to start a significant nest egg that children can continue building throughout their life.

"All of us are concerned about the retirement savings and security of today's youth," said Murtha. "By allowing children to participate in an IRA, this legislation will ensure that they get a jumpstart on their retirement savings and provide an incentive for family and

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KIDS IRA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

friends to contribute to their account.”

The United States has the lowest national savings rate in the industrialized world. For the last quarter of 2008, Americans' annual personal savings rate stood at 3.2 percent. It was 10.8 percent in 1984.

Specifically, the Kids IRA Act would:

- Ensure that any young American who had a K-IRA established for them would end up with a comfortable retirement and his/her benefactors would receive a tax benefit.
- Offer a golden opportunity for parents and grandparents to transfer wealth to their children or grandchildren, nieces or nephews and younger relatives in a nearly effortless, incremental way.
- Increase the savings rate of Americans and create a “savings pool” for many decades.

- Increase the financial literacy of millions of young Americans as they follow the progress of their K-IRA portfolio and become empowered to control their own financial future at an early age.

- Not involve the expenditure of any federal dollars.

K-IRA allows contributions to be made up until the child reaches the age of 26, at which point the account would then be rolled into a regular Roth IRA. Contributors are eligible for a 20 percent tax deduction. Like a regular Roth IRA, contributions will be limited to a maximum of \$5,000 per year.

Enacting the Kids IRA Act would be a straightforward American approach to a problem: simple in concept, looking to the future, involving the participation of families and simultaneously offering a great benefit to the nation.

STIMULUS FUNDS AT WORK

In February, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to jumpstart our struggling economy, to put Americans back to work, and to invest in our nation's aging infrastructure. Already, a number of area projects have been funded with stimulus dollars:

- The Monongahela River locks at Charleroi received \$84 million to continue construction of the new river wall, and to construct the upper and lower guard walls.
- The City of Johnstown received \$421,437 for street paving and to remove blighted/abandoned properties.
- The Lower Ten Mile Run sewer project in Greene County received \$1.55 million.
- The Roaring Run Trail in Armstrong County received \$780,000 for trail widening and rest room construction.
- The restoration of US Route 119 from Penn State Fayette to Pechin Road received \$5 million.
- The Apollo Boro Sewer Separation Project in Armstrong County received \$7 million.

Recent Legislation Passed by Congress:**Credit Cardholders Bill of Rights**

This legislation, signed into law by President Obama on 05/22/09, provides tough new protections for consumers by banning unfair rate increases, abusive fees, and penalties—such as retroactive rate hikes on existing balances and double-cycle billing—giving consumers clear information, and strengthening enforcement.

Military Procurement Reform

Cracks down on waste and cost overruns of Pentagon weapons systems by increasing oversight of the acquisition process, promoting greater use of competition, and curbing conflicts of interest. This legislation was signed into law on 05/22/09.

Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act of 2009

Signed into law on 05/20/09, this legislation provides the Justice Department with more tools for prosecuting the mortgage scams and corporate frauds that contributed to the current economic crisis. It also creates an independent commission to examine the causes and factors of the crisis.

Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009

The most significant conservation bill in 15 years, this legislation was signed into law by President Obama on 03/30/09 and creates 2 million new acres of wilderness across 9 states; establishes 3 new national park units; designates 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers; and recognizes new Historic Sites and Heritage Areas.



Congressman Murtha welcomes employees of Nokomis Inc. to the U.S. Capitol. Nokomis develops and markets electromagnetic products for the defense industry. Founded in 2002, they currently have nearly 30 employees working in Charleroi, Washington County.

MURTHA ANNOUNCES LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT GRANTS

Congressman Murtha recently announced over \$1.4 million in federal grants for police departments in western Pennsylvania. Murtha secured this funding through an earmark, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Technologies Program under the U.S. Department of Justice COPS program, in the fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill.

Police departments throughout the 12th Congressional District must submit a detailed application for funding, which is then reviewed by a panel and the Justice Department to ensure federal guidelines are met, and grants are awarded based on department need and the availability of funds. These grants may be used to help purchase equipment (protective vests, vehicles, computers, radios, uniforms, weapons), training, and supplies that otherwise would not be attainable.

"These grants improve the ability of law enforcement agencies throughout southwestern Pennsylvania to fight crime and to keep our communities safe," said Murtha. "Many of our smaller police departments can't afford to purchase the necessary equipment and training they need, which is why I'm proud to secure this funding and to support their efforts."

Allegheny County

Forward Township Police Department, \$10,348
Tarentum Borough Police Department, \$20,000

Armstrong County

Apollo Borough Police Department, \$19,000
Armstrong County Sheriff, \$19,000
Bethel Township Police Department, \$19,000
Gilpin Township Police Department, \$20,000
Kiski Township Police Department, \$14,056
Kittanning Police Department, \$19,500
Leechburg Police Department, \$20,000
Manor Township Police Department, \$19,000
Parks Township Police Department, \$20,000
South Buffalo Township Police Department, \$20,000

Cambria County

Adams Township Police Department, \$16,568
Blacklick Township Police Department, \$9,380
Cambria Township Police Department, \$14,000
Carrolltown Borough Police Department, \$17,000
Cresson Township Police Department, \$19,000
Croyle Township Police Department, \$20,000
East Conemaugh Police Department, \$20,000
East Taylor Township Police Department, \$20,000
Ebensburg Borough Police Department, \$15,767
Ferndale Borough Police Department, \$9,707
Geistown Police Department, \$19,000
Jackson Township Police Department, \$17,100
Johnstown Police Department, \$20,000
Nanty Glo Borough Police Department, \$13,800
Portage Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Richland Township Police Department, \$20,000
Sankertown Borough Police Department, \$16,589
South Fork Borough Police Department, \$19,000
Stonycreek Township Police Department, \$19,000
Summerhill Township Police Department, \$19,000
Vintondale Police Department, \$19,000
West Hills Police Department, \$20,000

Fayette County

Brownsville Police Department, \$17,000
Connellsville Police Department, \$19,000
Everson Police Department, \$11,900
Fayette County Drug Taskforce, \$20,000
Fayette County Sheriff, \$19,000
Luzerne Township Police Department, \$19,000
Masontown Borough Police Department, \$18,000
Perryopolis Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Redstone Township Police Department, \$16,720

Uniontown Police Department, \$20,000
Washington Township Police Department, \$15,500

Indiana County

Indiana Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Indiana County Sheriff, \$19,000

Somerset County

Hooversville Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Paint Borough Police Department, \$18,655
Paint Township Police Department, \$20,000
Seven Springs Borough Police Department, \$15,104
Somerset County Sheriff, \$18,010

Washington County

California Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Carroll Township Police Department, \$20,000
Centerville Borough Police Department, \$19,000
Charleroi Police Department, \$21,000
Donora Police Department, \$10,450
East Bethlehem Police Department, \$8,900
Fellowfield Township Police Department, \$19,000
Houston Police Department, \$5,326
North Charleroi Borough Police Department, \$10,112
R.E.S.A Regional Police Department, \$10,800
South Strabane Township Police Department, \$17,500
West Brownsville Police Department, \$19,000

Westmoreland County

Allegheny Township Police Department, \$11,000
Avonmore Borough Police Department, \$12,600
Derry Boro Police Department, \$14,350
Latrobe Police Department, \$20,000
Lower Burrell Police Department, \$20,000
Monessen Police Department, \$20,000
Mount Pleasant Borough Police Department, \$13,639
New Kensington Police Department, \$19,458
North Belle Vernon Police Department, \$20,000
Rostraver Township Police Department, \$17,500
Saint Clair Township Police Department, \$20,000
Scottdale Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Seward Borough Police, \$11,390
Upper Burrell Police Department, \$10,475
Vandergrift Police Department, \$17,300
Washington Township Police Department, \$20,000
West Leechburg Borough Police Department, \$16,500
West Newton Borough Police Department, \$20,000
Westmoreland County Sheriff's Department, \$20,000

EARMARKS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

National Guard Readiness Center in Waynesburg later this year to replace the current 93-year old armory. The ongoing expansion of US Route 22 to a four-lane highway, and the completion of the intermodal facility in New Stanton came about because of earmarks.

"Furthermore, there are countless examples where earmarks have greatly benefited the American people and have saved tax dollars. The Penn State Electro-Optics Center, in Armstrong County, has documented over \$1 billion in savings for the Defense Department in just the past few years. Johnstown's DRS Technologies has saved the Navy, through an earmark, over \$1.5 billion on a single program. The National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining,

in Latrobe, has saved the Defense Department nearly \$500 million in manufacturing costs.

"I have always said that my ideas come from you. I rely on our local officials and County Commissioners to tell me what they need to create jobs and further economic growth. My office receives thousands of earmark requests each year, and every request is properly reviewed and vetted through a lengthy and thorough process. In the end, we only recommend funding those that are cost-effective and provide a worthy service or product to the taxpayer.

"National Journal Magazine said in a recent column that, "Earmark spending today is, if anything, more transparent, more accountable, and



Congressman Murtha discusses new technology with doctors from Conemaugh Hospital at the 2009 Johnstown-Cambria County Showcase for Commerce. The annual business and industry show featured 215 exhibitors and booths this year and \$110 million in contracts were announced by local companies at the event.

more promptly disclosed than is non-earmark spending." The "non-earmark spending" they are referring to is when Washington bureaucrats, not representatives of the people, decide how to spend your tax dollars.

"This is the truth about Congressional earmarks, the facts that are too often

ignored by critics of the lawmaking process.

"My job is to represent the people who have given me the opportunity to serve. I don't apologize for directing federal funds to western Pennsylvania, nor do I apologize for trying to improve the quality of life in our region. That's my job.

NINE STUDENTS APPOINTED TO US MILITARY ACADEMIES

Nine of Congressman Murtha's nominees to our nation's military academies have accepted appointments.

"One of the things I look forward to most each year is nominating students to our nation's military academies," said Murtha. "I am so proud of these young men and women. They are among the very best and brightest students in our nation and I applaud their work

and service both inside and outside the classroom. They represent the future leaders of our military, and I am honored that they have chosen to serve our great country. Joyce and I both wish them continued success throughout their academic and military service."

Murtha has sent over 400 students to the Academies since 1974.

Those who have accepted appointments are:

U.S. Naval Academy

- Ian W. Benninger of Smithfield, Fayette County.
- Alexander A. Chatman III of Washington, Washington County.
- Stephen C. Meidus of West Leechburg, Westmoreland County.
- Joseph D. Rizzo of Johnstown, Cambria County.

U.S. Military Academy

- Megan M. Maurer of Hollsopple, Somerset County.
- Emily B. McCarthy of Eighty-Four, Washington County.
- Aaron A. Retter of Apollo, Westmoreland County.
- Brad M. Strimel of Canonsburg, Washington County.
- Joseph S. Walters of Pleasant Unity, Westmore-

The Floor of the U.S. House of Representatives has 446 seats. These seats are unassigned, and Members can sit wherever they like, except for the last Democratic seat, in the last row. For over three decades, that seat has been occupied by Cong. Murtha, and he is surrounded by members of the PA Delegation and our friends from neighboring states. Numerous stories have been written about Murtha's Corner, and this newsletter is appropriately titled as such.